

BERWICK-UPON-TWEED TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Town Council Finance and Resources Committee Meeting held on Monday, 9 November 2015 at 6.00 pm in the Ante Room at The Town Hall, Marygate, Berwick-upon-Tweed

PRESENT:

Councillors:	Paul Hodgson (Chair)	K Graham
	H Bettison	G Hill
	D Blackburn	G McLean
	I Dixon	G Roughead
	A Forbes	C Seymour
	A Gibson	G Smith

IN ATTENDANCE:

W Pattison, Town Clerk
4 Members of the Public

OPEN SESSION

Ms Janet Clare Dean queried an invoice relating to catering for a Freeman event. The Clerk advised it was an error which Cllr Bettison was querying and Cllr Hodgson advised that everyone had paid in advance for their meal and the invoice had been sent to the Council in error. Cllr Blackburn mentioned the Victorian Shelter at Ness Gate which has fallen into disrepair and had received written confirmation from Leslie Wood (strategic estate management) that the shelter is the property of NCC. Mr Paul Leo, NCC was to check on this re the NCC asset list and was to come back to the Clerk re further action. The Clerk will write again to Mr Leo on this matter.

F082/15 1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

None, apart from Cllr Bettison who had advised she would be slightly late.

F083/15 2. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

Cllr Mclean wished to advise that the Christmas Trees provided last year were not in a poor condition, it was the holders which were at fault. The minutes of the meeting

held on 12 October 2015 were then proposed by Cllr Smith and seconded by Cllr Hill agreed and signed as a correct record.

F084/15

3. DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST

Cllr Blackburn item 11 and Cllr Graham item 10.

F085/15

4. REQUEST FOR DISPENSATION

There were no requests for dispensation.

F086/15

5. AUTHORISATION OF PAYMENTS AND ORDERS

Cllr Hill advised items 258 and 259 should be carefully considered as there was a cost saving re election expenses due to the count being done in tandem with another Council. Cllr Hill also queried an NCC invoice (260) in regard to plant watering for nearly £5k. Suspend Standing Orders – Mr Darling advised that the Council should query previous years' invoices. Re-instate Standing Orders. The Clerk will ascertain a breakdown of costs and also query the low amount invoiced last year compared to this year. Cllr Seymour queried VAT costs.

RESOLVED: To approve all payments and orders appended to these minutes, whilst deferring the NCC invoice until further enquiries have been made.

F087/15

6. APPROVAL OF PLANNED EXPENDITURE

None.

F088/15

7. COUNCILLORS GUIDANCE GRANT APPLICATIONS

Councillor Forbes suggested changes/tightening up re current approval of requests for grants. Cllr Seymour queried whether the Finance Officer had given his approval to the changes and was advised no. Cllr Hodgson advised tighter controls will be needed in the future and this will be discussed by the auditor who will be updating Councillors on 23rd November and also the public and press re his findings. Cllr Blackburn suggested that the Council go ahead with Cllr Forbes suggestions and if they need amending this can be done at a later date.

RESOLVED: To adopt Cllr Forbes changes and amend if necessary

F089/15

8. BUDGET SETTING

A pre-budget meeting was held to discuss the 2016/17 budget and also the precept. Some savings were suggested and the Finance Officer will supply an amended budget for the next finance meeting. Cllr McLean requested the Clerk ascertain how

much the legal fees will be in regard to the transfer of the Play Parks. Cllr Graham requested what amount of cash should be held in reserve as funds.

RESOLVED: The Finance Officer will prepare an amended budget for the next finance meeting and the Clerk will try to gain an estimate of legal fees re the freehold transfer of play parks.

F090/15

9. SPITTAL PUBLIC CONVENIENCES

Councillor Dixon advised how much the toilets were needed throughout the winter in Spittal. Many people walk by the sea and the closure of the toilets would be a serious blow for the community of Spittal. It was proposed by Cllr Dixon and seconded by Cllr Roughead to pay the £2k requested by NCC to keep the toilets open throughout the winter. Cllr Blackburn also advised costings should be gained for the portaloos and this may be channelled into gaining a full time toilet attendant at the Castlegate toilets. Cllr Blackburn advised he had asked several times for a breakdown of past costs / income in relation to the Castlegate toilets so that BTC can consider meeting the marginal cost of employing a full time janitor for Castlegate- and possibly the 3 town portaloos. Cllr Blackburn also advised that BTC should be made aware of the financial cost and contract implications associated with the portaloos.

RESOLVED: To pay NCC £2,000 to keep the toilets at Spittal open

F091/15

10. PRIOR PARK CHRISTMAS TREE

Cllr Graham requested the Council's permission to buy Christmas lights for the xmas tree in Prior Park. Councillors gave consideration to likely cost and gave permission of up to £250 to buy them. Cllr Forbes also requires xmas lights and had hoped she may get a local business owner to contribute towards the cost. Should this money not be readily available, the Council will also provide to Cllr Forbes with up to £250 for xmas lights at Newfields. Cllr Seymour advised there may be spare xmas lights at the depot. Cllr Mclean mentioned all lights should be low voltage LED lights. The Clerk was requested to ask Mr Steven Monks to check all the town's xmas lights re safety reasons which are to be shortly installed.

RESOLVED: To provide up to £250 to Cllrs Graham and Forbes to buy xmas lights for Prior Park and Newfields and the Clerk to ask Mr Steven Monks to check the safety of all xmas lights to be installed in the town.

F092/15

11. REQUESTS FROM CLLR DAVID BLACKBURN FOR £15

Cllr Blackburn left the room.

Cllr Blackburn requested the Council reimburse £15 which Cllr Blackburn spent on flowers for 3 girls who did work on painting benches in the town on behalf of the Duke of Edinburgh Award scheme. Most Councillors were in general agreement to this request but thought Cllr Blackburn should have asked permission before going ahead and buying the flowers as this is not something the Council would normally agree to do and will not do again. A request to send all participants a souvenir of Berwick was refused. Cllr Blackburn returned to the meeting.

A discussion ensued re lack of communication in regard to the Civic Mayoralty side and the Town Council and an instance was given regarding the march of wounded soldiers from John O'Groats to Lands End which took place earlier in the year and went/was unremarked when they all marched into Berwick. Cllr Bettison advised that the communication received in regard to this matter was to greet and not to host the walking wounded and this was done. Hosting is not considered a civic event and it is usually paid for by the Mayor personally. Cllr Bettison will ensure the Mayor's Civic calendar is sent to the Town Clerk

RESOLVED: To pay Cllr Blackburn £15.00 and the Mayor to send the Civic Calendar to the Town Clerk

F093/15

12. LITTER BINS

Six new bins have been purchased for the town centre at an approximate cost of £250 each and which were budgeted for. The Clerk requested a further 4 bins to replace some of the older bins in Marygate/ Golden Square which will then make all of the bins uniform. Cllr Gibson advised there should be a further 9 bins purchased and all the older bins removed from Marygate which would then make way for the new bins and they in turn could be re-sited in other areas of the Town where there are broken or missing bins. Cllr Roughead asked if the new bins could be joint recycling and ordinary waste, the Clerk advised this was not yet possible. **Suspend Standing Orders** – Ms Clare Dean advised there were no recycling bins between Castlegate and Hide Hill and it was difficult carrying recyclable materials to these locations **Re-instate Standing Orders**. Cllr Hodgson advised the new locality officers would be attending to litter and general waste. Cllr McLean advised his

concern at the railings in Spittal and thought if NCC did not attend to them as a matter of urgency they would be lost completely. The ordering of 9 new bins was then proposed by Cllr Gibson and seconded by Cllr Bettison.

RESOLVED: To order 9 new bins for Marygate and to re-site the present bins where required and to contact NCC again in regard to the railings at Spittal.

F094/15

13. SERGEANT-AT-MACE'S JOB EVALUATION

A request to job evaluate the Sergeant of Mace was requested and was approved by Councillors with Cllrs Hill and Seymour abstaining.

RESOLVED: To job evaluate the Sergeant of Mace at a cost of £300.

F095/15

14. FINANCIAL DECISIONS MADE BY OTHER COMMITTEES

None.

F096/15

15. APPLICATIONS FOR FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

None.

F097/15

16. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be held on Monday, 7 December 2015 at 6.00pm.

Apologies in advance for the next Finance Meeting were received from Cllrs Blackburn and McLean

**Berwick-upon-Tweed Town Council
PAYMENTS TO BE APPROVED**

See page 3 for accompanying explanatory notes

Voucher Code	Date	Cheque	Description	Supplier	Net	VAT	Total
224 IT Support	04/11/2015	101189	IT support	Northern Lab	90.00	18.00	108.00
228 Photocopies	04/11/2015	101190	Photocopies	Capital Solutions	76.65	15.33	91.98
229 Photocopier	04/11/2015	101190	Photocopier service agreement	Capital Solutions	195.00	39.00	234.00
230 Photocopier	04/11/2015	101190	Photocopier service agreement	Capital Solutions	345.00	69.00	414.00
231 Cleaning	04/11/2015	101191	Cleaning	Crystal Stone Ltd	60.00	0.00	60.00
236 Stationery & Printing	04/11/2015	101192	Stationery	Viking	86.28	17.26	103.54
237 Postage	04/11/2015	101192	Stamps	Viking	63.00	0.00	63.00
238 Stationery & Printing	04/11/2015	101192	Stationery	Viking	201.77	40.35	242.12
239 Stationery & Printing	04/11/2015	101192	Stationery	Viking	11.36	2.27	13.63
240 Planning Advice	04/11/2015	101193	Professional advice	Turnburry Planning	294.50	0.00	294.50
241 Stationery & Printing	04/11/2015	101194	Printing	Shiel Morrison	26.00	5.20	31.20
242 Civic expenses	04/11/2015	101194	Printing	Shiel Morrison	18.00	3.60	21.60
243 Civic expenses	04/11/2015	101194	Printing	Shiel Morrison	48.00	0.00	48.00
244 Civic expenses	04/11/2015	101194	Printing	Shiel Morrison	35.00	7.00	42.00
245 Civic expenses	04/11/2015	101194	Printing	Shiel Morrison	58.00	11.60	69.60
246 Floral Displays [materials]	04/11/2015	101195	Plants	J Parkers	205.00	41.00	246.00
247 Floral Displays [materials]	04/11/2015	101195	Plants	J Parkers	250.00	50.00	300.00
248 Bins - litter/grit	04/11/2015	101196	Litter bin replacement	Broxap Ltd	1,380.00	276.00	1,656.00
249 Public Realm Works	04/11/2015	101196	Cycle rack	Broxap Ltd	175.00	35.00	210.00
250 Civic expenses	04/11/2015	101197	Catering	Ruth Forrest Catering	828.00	0.00	828.00
251 Bus Shelter Maintenance	04/11/2015	101198	Cleaning	Wheeleigh Clean	241.00	0.00	241.00
252 Civic expenses	04/11/2015	101199	Catering	Audela	700.00	0.00	700.00
253 Floral Displays [materials]	04/11/2015	101200	Plants	Newton Don Nursery	487.60	97.52	585.12
254 Community Projects	04/11/2015	101201	Grant	CAB	20,000.00	0.00	20,000.00
255 Councillor Travel & Subsistence	04/11/2015	101202	Mileage	P Hodgson	42.75	0.00	42.75
256 Promotion	04/11/2015	101203	Road signs	AA Media Ltd	270.00	54.00	324.00
257 Promotion	04/11/2015	101203	Road signs	AA Media Ltd	270.00	54.00	324.00
258 By-election Expenses	04/11/2015	101204	Election expenses 260112	Northumberland County Council	2,601.30	0.00	2,601.30
259 By-election Expenses	04/11/2015	101204	Election expenses 260112	Northumberland County Council	5,165.44	1,033.09	6,198.53

Voucher Code	Date	Cheque No.	Cheque No	Supplier	Net	VAT	Total
260 Floral Displays [labour]	04/11/2015	101204	Watering	Northumberland County Council	4,961.08	992.22	5,953.30
261 Bins - litter/grit	04/11/2015	101204	Dog bin instalation	Northumberland County Council	30.67	6.13	36.80
262 Public Seat Maintenance	04/11/2015	101204	Seat maintenance	Northumberland County Council	6.96	1.39	8.35
263 Bins - litter/grit	04/11/2015	101204	Dog bag dispenser instalation	Northumberland County Council	61.34	12.27	73.61
264 Salaries:	04/11/2015	101204	Salaries:	Northumberland County Council	4,494.01	0.00	4,494.01
265 Salaries: Payroll costs	04/11/2015	101204	PAYroll	Northumberland County Council	2.00	0.40	2.40
266 Public Realm Works	04/11/2015	101204	Totem pole	Northumberland County Council	622.64	124.53	747.17

Berwick-upon-Tweed Town Council PAYMENTS TO BE NOTED

Voucher Code	Date	Cheque No.	Description	Supplier	Net	VAT	Total
267 Public Seat Maintenance	04/11/2015	101187	Paints etc	D Blackburn	328.82	0.00	328.82

Berwick-upon-Tweed Town Council DIRECT PAYMENTS TO BE NOTED

Voucher Code	Date	Cheque No	Description	Supplier	Net	VAT	Total
225 Salaries: Pension	04/11/2015	directdebit	Pension	NEST	153.13	0.00	153.13
226 Telecoms	04/11/2015	directdebit	phone	BT	126.05	25.21	151.26
227 Telecoms	04/11/2015	directdebit	Internet services	BT	95.25	19.05	114.30
232 SSP Electricity	04/11/2015	directdebit	Electricity	British Gas	31.57	1.57	33.14
233 Gas	04/11/2015	directdebit	Gas	Southern Electric	22.73	1.13	23.86
234 Electricity	04/11/2015	directdebit	Electricity	Southern Electric	44.43	2.22	46.65
235 Water	04/11/2015	directdebit	Water services	Northumbrian Water	53.01	0.00	53.01

Explanatory Notes to accompany payment list.

Voucher	Notes
224	Monthly IT support
228	Monthly charge for photocopies/office printing
229	Photocopier service contract renewal
230	Photocopier extended parts warranty
231	Office cleaning
236-9	Stationary, stamps & office supplies
240	Travel costs for attendance at Neighbourhood Plan meeting
241-5	Printing Mayor's Sunday & Mayor's Club Dinner
246-7	Bulbs for floral displays; invoices for 2014 & 2015
248	Litter bins
249	Cycle racks
250	Mayor's Club Dinner catering
251	Bus Shelter cleaning
252	National Freemen Association AGM Catering
253	Winter bedding plants
254	Grant to CAB paid from Schedule III surplus
255	Travel expenses to meeting, Morpeth
256-7	Autumn Festivals AA signs
258-9	By-election costs Castle, Magdelene & Grove
260	Hanging basket watering - 2 people for 4.5hrs per day, 3 days per week, 12 weeks
261	Placing new bin at Fivve Arches fiels
262	Putting memorial plaque on seat
263	Siting new dog bag dispensers
264-5	October pay costs
266	costs for siting Totem Pole
267	Paints, equipment and protective clothing for DoE volunteers